

7 Mass Transit

7.1 Existing Conditions

Rural public transportation presents a unique challenge. Long trips and low population densities mean that it is a challenge to get sufficient ridership to support transit routes. In However, the lack of transportation options combined with the prevalence of elderly and low income people in many rural communities; it means that there is a need for such a service.

Each of the three designated MPOs has a fixed route public transit system operating in their respective areas. Greenville is served by the Greenville Transit Authority (GTA), Spartanburg is served by the Spartanburg Area Transit Agency (SPARTA), and Anderson is served by Electric City Transit (ECT). Because these transit providers are located inside the urban areas, they are not included in this study.

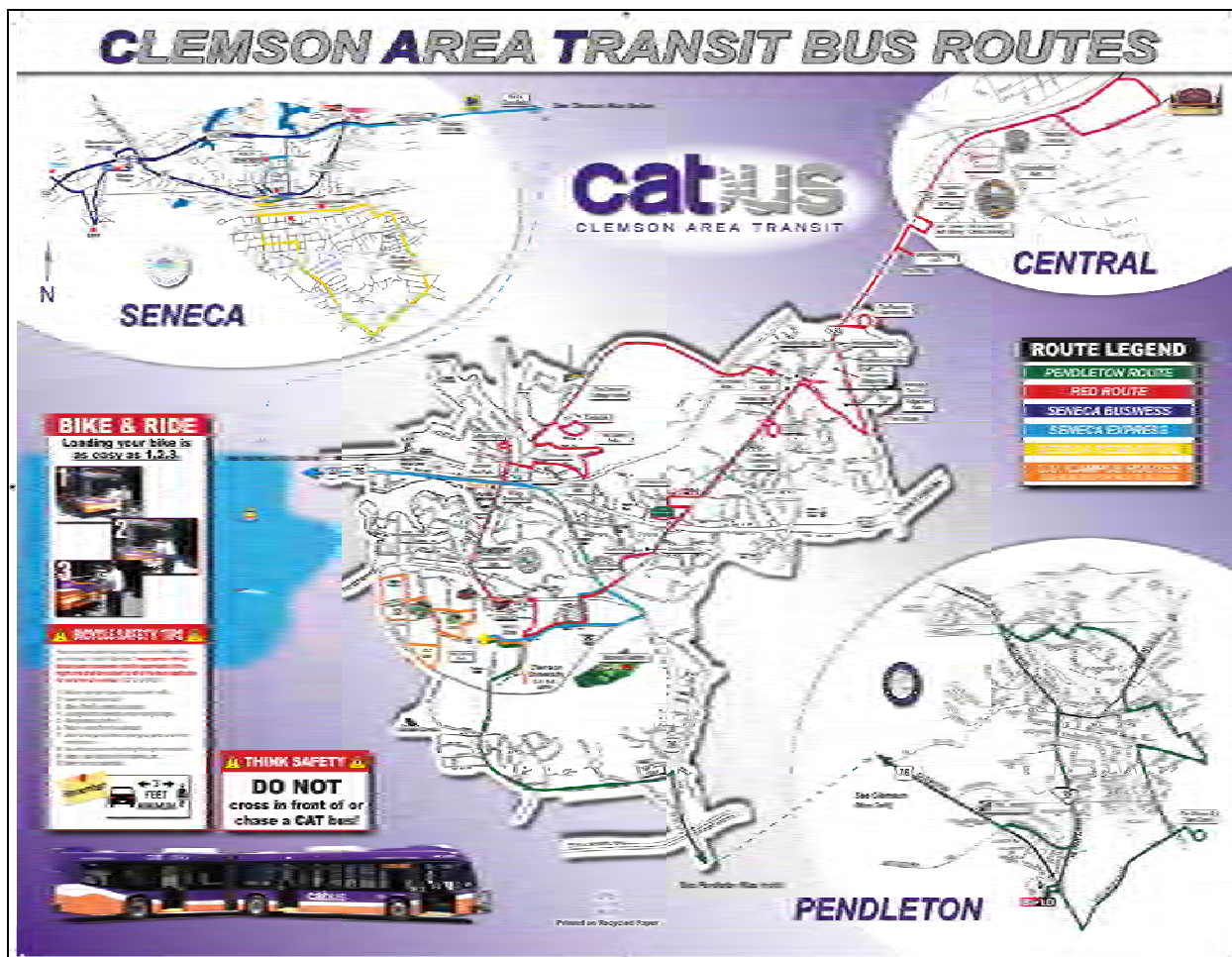
7.2 Transit

7.2.1 Clemson Area Transit

Currently, the only fixed-route transit provider in the rural ACOG study area is Clemson Area Transit (CAT). Founded in 1996, CAT is the largest fare-free transits system in the United States in terms of ridership. It is the one of the most used transit systems in South Carolina. The system was created with the goal of serving Clemson University students. To accomplish that goal, CAT has partnered with the City of Clemson to manage its operations, and is managed by officials from both the City and the University. Its service areas include Clemson University, the City of Clemson, the City of Seneca, the Town of Central, and the Town of Pendleton.

CAT currently operates six routes, which cover parts of three counties: Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens. **Figure 6** shows the current route structure of the CAT system.

Figure 6. CAT Routes, as of May 2016



CAT route schedules are oriented primarily for education and work trips. Some are designed for very specific purposes: for example the NightCat route is geared towards prevention of drinking and driving.

CAT has experienced phenomenal ridership increases over the last few years. This is due to expanded services and routes as well as a very affordable fare. CAT buses have also installed bike racks on their buses to appeal to a wider range of commuters.

7.2.2 Disabilities and Special Needs Boards

Each county in the ACOG region has Disabilities and Special Needs Boards that provide Title IX transportation services for eligible clients in their own counties respectively. Some use agency-operated vehicles while others contract out these services. In addition, a significant number of private transportation companies, including taxicab and shuttle companies operate in the ACOG region. These companies provide specialized services for individuals and groups. This year SCDOT is performing a study to determine the best way to coordinate the transit efforts of these agencies into one region wide system. This effort should result in a more efficient and productive system.

7.3 Regional Transportation

7.3.1 Bus

Greyhound has locations in the cities of Anderson, Duncan, Greenville, and Spartanburg. These locations are not in the ACOG study area but should be noted. They are within driving distance of our residents.

7.3.2 Train

Amtrak does have a stop in our study area. There is a stop in Clemson. It is on the Carolina/ Piedmont line. Figure 7.2 shows the intermodal facilities located within the region.

7.4 Identified Needs

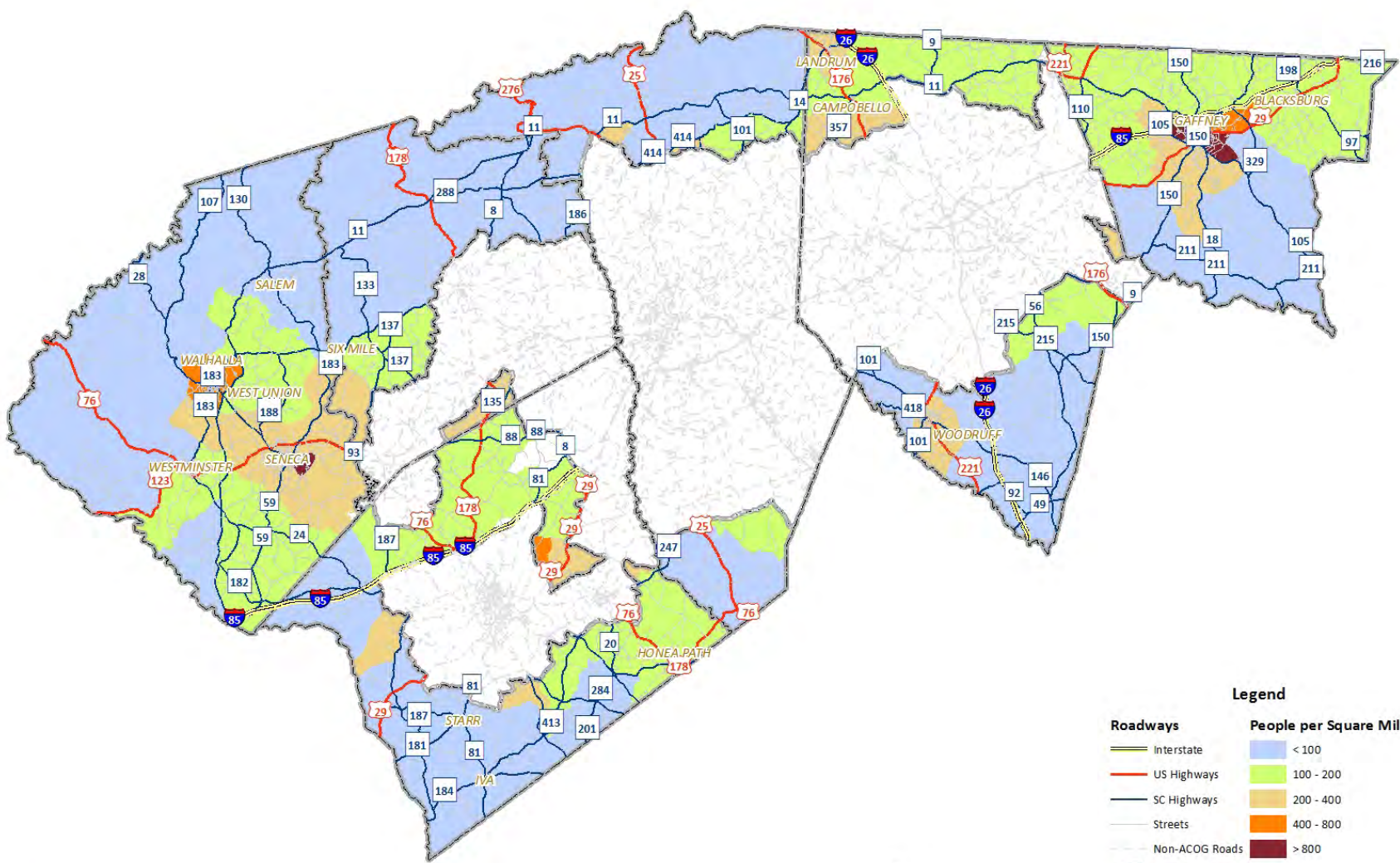
As previously mentioned, population and employment density are determining factors when looking at the viability of fixed route service. **Map 23** shows population density patterns in the region. There are a few moderate density areas in the region: Easley, Clemson, Gaffney, Walhalla, Seneca, Pickens, Pendleton, Westminster, and Central. However, the majority of the rural area is low density.

Another key indicator of transit need is the percentage of households without access to a vehicle. Often these individuals depend on others to provide them transportation, particularly in rural areas where destinations are too far to reach by foot or pedal. **Map 24** shows the concentration of zero vehicle households across the area. There are particularly high concentrations of these households in Gaffney and Clemson-Seneca areas.

The distribution of senior citizens and people with disabilities can also be an indicator of transit need, since many of these individuals may be unable or unwilling to drive an automobile. The ACOG region is becoming a retiree destination. Overall, seniors aged 65 and up, account for 13.25 % of the region population.

Map 23. ACOG Region, People Per Square Mile, 2010

Appalachian Council of Governments
 People per Square Mile by Census Tract, 2010



Legend

- | Roadways | People per Square Mile |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Interstate | < 100 |
| US Highways | 100 - 200 |
| SC Highways | 200 - 400 |
| Streets | 400 - 800 |
| Non-ACOG Roads | > 800 |
| Municipalities | |
| County | |
| MPO Jurisdiction | |
| Lakes | |



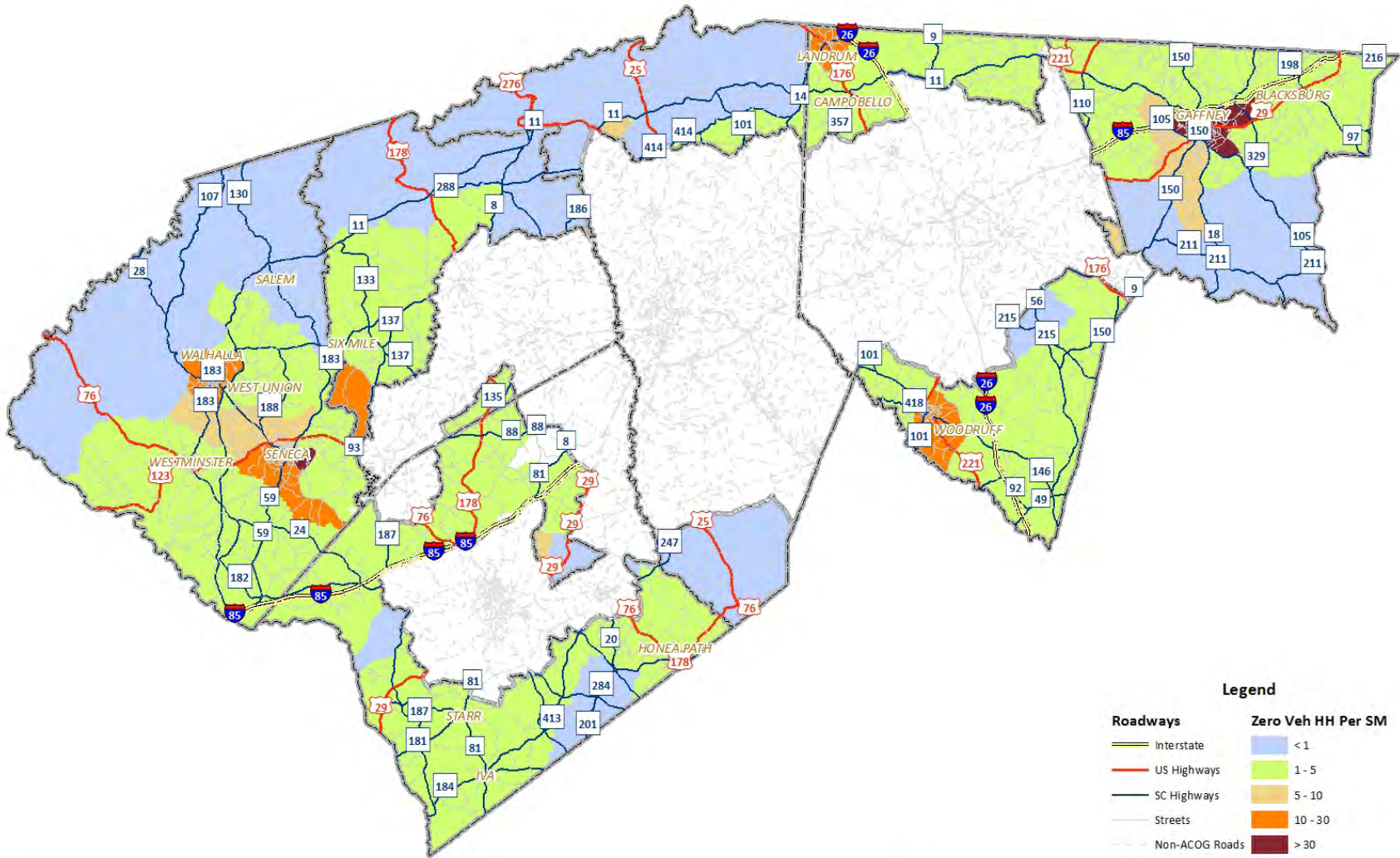
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0 3 6 12 18 Miles

Map 24. ACOG Region, Zero Vehicle Households Per Square Mile, 2014

Appalachian Council of Governments
 Zero Vehicle Households per Square Mile by Census Tract, 2014



Legend

Roadways

- Interstate
- US Highways
- SC Highways
- Streets
- Non-ACOG Roads

Zero Veh HH Per SM

- < 1
- 1 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 30
- > 30

- ⊕ Municipalities
- ⊞ County
- ⊞ MPO Jurisdiction
- ⊞ Lakes



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